

REMARKS

By the present amendment, claim 1 has been amended by incorporating therein the subject matter of claim 5. Accordingly, claim 5 has been canceled, claim 6 has been amended to be dependent on claim 1 instead of claim 5, claim 9 has been amended to be dependent on claim 7 instead of claim 8, and claims 8, 11, and 13 have been canceled as duplicate.

Further, new claims 14-15 have been added. Support for the added recitations is found in the original application, in particular in the paragraph bridging pages 38-39 and illustrated on Fig. 9.

Also, new claims 16-24 have been added. Claims 16-24 correspond to claims 2-4, 7-8, 10, 12, and 14-15 but are dependent directly or indirectly on claim 6.

Claims 1-4, 6-7, 9-10, 12, and 14-24 are pending in the present application. Independent claim 1, and claims 2-4, and 6 dependent thereon, are directed to a laminated optical film. Claims 7 and 9 are directed to an elliptically polarizing plate and are dependent directly or indirectly on claim 1. Claims 10, 12, and 14-15 are directed to an image display and are dependent directly or indirectly on claim 1. Claims 16-24 correspond to claims 2-4, 7-8, 10, 12, and 14-15 but are dependent directly or indirectly on claim 6.

In the Office Action, claims 1-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over EP 1 069 461 ("EP'461").

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested. EP'461 does not disclose a laminated optical film comprising three optical films as recited in present claim 1. Specifically, first retardation film 13 and third retardation film 19 are located on a front side of a liquid crystal cell 1, whereas second retardation film 14 is located on a rear side of the liquid

crystal cell 1 of EP'461. Thus, retardation films 13, 14 and 19 do not form an optical film in EP'461.

More specifically, paragraph [0035] of EP'461 discloses a third retardation film having $n_x > n_z = n_y$, which corresponds to an optically anisotropic film, or $n_x > n_z > n_y$, such that $N_z = 0.3$ (see EP'461 at col. 6, line 21). However, a single retardation film, namely, third retardation film 19, is laminated to the first retardation film 13. As a result, EP'461 fails to teach or suggest a laminated optical film comprising optical films (1), (2) and (3) as recited in present claim 1. Therefore, the present claims are not obvious over EP'461.

In addition, with respect to present claim 6, it is submitted that EP'461 is completely silent as to the order of the lamination of optical films (1), (2) and (3) as recited in present claim 6. Therefore, for this reason alone, present claim 6 is not obvious over EP'461.

Further, with respect to present claims 14-15, it is submitted that EP'461 is completely silent as the laminated optical film disposed on one side of a liquid crystal cell or mounted on a backlight side of the liquid crystal cell. Therefore, for these respective reasons alone, present claims 14-15 are not obvious over EP'461.

Further, with respect to the additional features recited in the other dependent claims, it is submitted that EP'461 is completely silent as to the combinations of features as recited in these claims. Therefore, for these respective reasons alone, the dependent claims are not obvious over EP'461.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the rejection should be withdrawn.

In conclusion, the invention as presently claimed is patentable. It is believed that the claims are in allowable condition and a notice to that effect is earnestly requested.

Serial Number: 10/733,445

Group Art Unit: 2871

In the event there is, in the Examiner's opinion, any outstanding issue and such issue may be resolved by means of a telephone interview, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

In the event this paper is not considered to be timely filed, the Applicants hereby petition for an appropriate extension of the response period. Please charge the fee for such extension and any other fees which may be required to our Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,

WESTERMAN, HATTORI, DANIELS & ADRIAN, LLP



Nicolas E. Seckel
Attorney for Applicants
Reg. No. 44,373

Atty. Docket No.: 032170

Customer No.: 38834

1250 Connecticut Avenue NW Suite 700

Washington, D.C. 20036

Tel: (202) 822-1100

Fax: (202) 822-1111

NES:rep